



**TATIARA DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**MAINTENANCE OF  
FOOTPATHS & NATURE STRIPS  
IN URBAN AREAS**

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## 1. DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions apply:

**Walkway:** A walkway is the formed or constructed facility that is provided and maintained, principally for the movement of pedestrians along a street or road, usually in residential areas.

**Nature Strip:** A nature strip is that tract of land within a road reserve that is located between the property boundary and the roadway. Walkways are usually located within this area.

**Roadway:** A roadway is the constructed section of carriageway between the backs of kerbs in streets and roads, or that area between the inverts of surface drainage swales where kerbing has not been provided in streets or roads.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

In accordance with Section 208 of the Local Government Act 1999, the control of public roads in this area (other than State controlled Highways) is vested in the Tatiara District Council.

Council will not water or mow grassed nature strips in front of residential, commercial or industrial properties. This activity has normally been carried out by the property owner or the tenant (if required by the lease conditions).

## 3. GENERAL POLICY

The majority of property owners (and tenants) have accepted this responsibility, in keeping with their preference to maintain a neat and tidy appearance of the frontage of their property.

However, it should be noted that there is no statutory requirement for the property owner to comply.

## 4. OBJECTIVES

The objective of this policy is to set out the respective responsibilities of both Council and property owners (and tenants) in relation to the maintenance and mowing of nature strips, in order to provide a safe, functional and aesthetically pleasing streetscape. This policy applies to all Council controlled lands between property boundaries and Council controlled roads in the residential areas.

The policy encourages residents to maintain the road reserve area that adjoins their property in a tidy condition, however property owners are urged to plan and undertake such work in consultation with Council to ensure safe pedestrian access and the protection of community assets.

## 5. PRINCIPLES

### **Nature Strip:**

The primary purpose of this land is to provide a safe buffer zone between property boundaries and traffic using the road, as well as providing an area for the provision of necessary services infrastructure such as power, water, telephone, STEDS, storm water etc. It is used primarily to

facilitate safe pedestrian movement alongside the roadway, while providing an area for the provision of infrastructure.

**Nature Strips - Acceptable Condition:**

Nature strips should be maintained to a reasonable level of appearance. This usually translates to the regular maintenance and mowing of grass throughout the year, in order to keep the nature strip:

- safe for the movement of pedestrians along the nature strip including on any walkways incorporated into nature strips,
- aesthetically pleasing, and
- conforming to the overall streetscape of residential areas.

## 6. POLICY

### 6.1 Nature Strips - Council's Responsibility

Council will maintain nature strips adjoining or within:

- Public reserve areas such as, bushland, parks or gardens;
- Council facilities such as public buildings, recreation grounds or swimming pools, and
- Central Business Districts.

### 6.2 Nature Strips - The Role of Property Owners (and tenants)

Traditionally, property owners (and tenants) have maintained nature strips adjoining their properties.

Council lacks the necessary resources to effectively maintain these extensive areas, which together constitute a large and sparsely spread area of land. As such, the efforts of property owners (and tenants) are required to maintain nature strips throughout Council's developed residential areas in a reasonable condition.

Maintenance of nature strips not only benefits owners of the adjoining property, it also enhances the utility, attractiveness and value of the community as a whole.

Where roadworks result in the reduction of road width, with a corresponding increase in the nature strip area, owners (and tenants) of the fronting property are expected to maintain this extended frontage. Such reduction in formation is normally associated with pavement reconstruction, sealing (including shoulders) and/or installation of kerb and gutter. The benefits of such works to the property owner in improved amenity and safety as well as reduces the probability of vermin infestation.

### 6.3 Street Trees

Section 232 of the Local Government Act 1999 states that before a council plants vegetation, or authorises or permits the planting of vegetation, on a road, the council must (in addition to complying with any other statutory requirement)—

- (a) give consideration to whether the vegetation is, on balance, appropriate to the proposed site taking into account—
  - (i) environmental and aesthetic issues; and

- (ii) the use and construction of the road (including the potential for interference with the construction of the road or with structures (including pipes, wires, cables, fixtures, fittings or other objects) in the road); and
  - (iii) road safety matters; and
  - (iv) other matters (if any) considered relevant by the council; and
- (b) if the vegetation may have a significant impact on residents, the proprietors of nearby businesses or advertisers in the area, follow the relevant steps set out in its public consultation policy.

Council periodically checks and carries out any necessary pruning, removal and replacement of trees and shrubs located in nature strips and public places. Property owners may apply to Council to remove or maintain trees or shrubs planted in nature strips adjacent to their property, however they cannot undertake such work without written approval from the Manager of Technical Services.

#### 6.4 Landscaping Nature Strips

Council supports the planting of street trees on footpaths but property owners require written permission from the Manager of Technical Services to landscape (other than grow grass) on Council's nature strip in front of their property.

Nature strips usually contain essential services such as sewer pipes, water pipes, telephone and power. Any change such as tree planting or landscaping requires consultation with and written authorisation from Council. Landscape developments may include the following features (provided they remain less than 500mm above the road edge and do not create a public hazard): suitably planted (e.g.: no roses or cacti) garden beds with "soft" borders only, shrubs, ground cover plants, bark or similar materials. When assessing requests (including plans of the proposed works) to landscape the nature strip Council will consider:

- Impact on the streetscape
- Ensuring that plants will not impede pedestrian access along the roadside.
- Risk of impacting on street drainage
- Plant trees/shrubs at least 2.4m from driveways
- Plant trees/shrubs at least 2m from drainage pits, service pits and fire hydrants
- Plant trees/shrubs at least 3m from power poles, street lights and service wires. Trees that will impact on ETSA's overhead wires will not be permitted and may be removed by ETSA
- Plant trees/shrubs at least 8m from corners of property boundaries at intersections of minor roads
- Plant trees/shrubs at least 15m from corners of property boundaries at intersections of main roads
- Ensure plants will not obscure or prevent access to signage, mailboxes, gates, lighting and footpaths
- Also consider sight lines, speed zones, topography, road layout and space required for rubbish bins.

#### 6.5 Prohibited Activities

The following list of activities that are prohibited on nature strips is not exhaustive and the omission of any particular activity from the list should not be taken that a specific activity is acceptable:

- Develop the nature strip (other than growing grass) without written approval from the Manager of Technical Services.

- Store or place any substance, material or object on the nature strip without written approval from the Manager of Technical Services.
- Install pavers, concrete, erect stone or brick walls, or similar structures or materials, on Council's nature strip.
- Allow any foliage to overhang a walkway or other pedestrian access to a height of less than 2.2 metres, for the full width of the nature strip, and not within 1.2 metres of the edge of any constructed walkway or other pedestrian access facility.
- Park or store any type of vehicle or trailer on Council's nature strip (registered or unregistered) or parts thereof.
- Dig any holes or trenches on the nature strip without first contacting Council and service authorities such as Telstra, ETSA and SA Water
- Carry out burning on the nature strip

**6.6 Neglected Areas, Causing Safety Hazards or Unsatisfactory Amenity.**

In cases where nature strips become overgrown, littered or generally not maintained to an acceptable condition, Council will write to the property owner and advise them of this policy. In exceptional circumstances Council will undertake the maintenance necessary to achieve the "Acceptable Condition of Nature Strips" outlined above.

**RECORD OF AMENDMENTS**

| <b>DATE</b> | <b>REVISION NO</b> | <b>REASON FOR AMENDMENT</b>                             |
|-------------|--------------------|---|
| 23-3-2011   | Rev: 00            | Draft Maintenance of Natures Strips Policy prepared     |
| 12-4-2011   | Rev: 01            | Maintenance of Natures Strips Policy adopted by Council |
| 08-12-2015  | Rev: 02            | Amended Section 6.2. Policy adopted by Council.         |